

Housing Committee
Legislative Office Building Room 2700
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Slossberg, Senator Hwang, Rep. Butler, and the esteemed members of the housing committee

My name is Dominic Cotton, I am a volunteer for the New London coalition for the homeless, a co-host of the television show Street Talk, and a resident of the city of Milford. I am offering testimony in support of House Bill # 6880 and Senate Bill #535 an act concerning the affordable land use appeals process. The affordable housing statute affectionately known as the 8-30G, has offered the ability for many of lower income residents to remain in their communities and raise their children in a city that might not have otherwise been possible. The need for appropriate affordable housing stock that meets the need of the millennial generation as they establish themselves, the disabled and elderly as they remain in the community, and the addition of diversity are what will sustain and grow our state into the future. The 8-30g statute allows for inclusivity within every town and city.

The issue at hand is not whether we should add to the ability for people of all incomes to remain in their community of choice, but how we can supply those communities with the tools to meet the needs of their community in a plan full manner. Currently, towns and cities planning and zoning boards are frequently superseded by unscrupulous developers that look to usurp the process through 8-30g appeals. After their initial building application is met with dissent from the zoning board and their neighbors that would be negatively impacted, they immediately refile by adding in the minimum amount of units to meet the standard. The effect on the immediate neighborhood is an increase in the population density in an area that may not safely support such structures and is out of character. This frequently creates a hardship for the adjacent property owners whose property values and quality of life suffer. I volunteered and actively campaigned with many of our local representatives and our state senator and heard many of these constituent complaints in the last election. Their voice and my communities opposition to these contractor practices are the reasons for my further examination of the 8-30g statute.

We have been told by many that the complex nature of this statute has made it difficult to change for one community without disrupting countless of the other 169 towns and cities in our state. In examining the 8-30g statute with regard to my local community I can see that we would qualify for a moratorium. We have many complexes within our city that meet the affordability requirements, but are not counted within the point system because of the type of housing or the property has not been deed restricted.

With respect to the first cause, we believe it is fair to count mobile manufactured home parks that meet the standard in House Bill 6880. This will allow for an additionally form of housing that is already in existence to be counted within many communities without disrupting other towns and cities affordable housing plans. We also believe that adding extra points for three

bedroom units adds to the incentive of meeting affordable family housing stock needs. We also support projects of mixed developments that support 60% family units to be inclusive of counting age restricted units as it would reflect the continuity of the community.

Incentives to develop affordable housing within specific zones is another tool to give towns and cities planning and zoning boards control over the character of their respective cities while continuing to push forward with increasing the affordable housing stock. We would also support the idea of allowing communities the opportunity to offer tax incentive to deed restrict housing that already exists.

In closing it is each individual town or cities responsibility to develop a plan that allows the to provide enough affordable housing stock to ensure they meet the standard of the 8-30g statute. If find that the tools provided and suggested under the proposed changed to the 8-30g statute will ensure affordable housing stock and assist communities in appropriately planning for their communities needs.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I can be reached at 203-362-9122 to answer any questions.

Sincerely
Dominic M. Cotton MHA